



Organización Internacional del Café
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Organisation Internationale du Café

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Report

**Report of the Virtual Screening Committee
on the meeting of 30 January 2006**

1. The 1st physical meeting of the Virtual Screening Committee (VSC) took place on 30 January 2006. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Pablo Dubois, Head of Operations of the International Coffee Organization (ICO), representing the Executive Director.

2. The Chairman welcomed Mrs. Carol Wilson of the United States, Dr Ernesto Illy of Italy and Mr. Dewa Made Sastrawan and Mrs. Rima Cempaka of Indonesia, all active Members of the Committee.

Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Committee adopted the draft Agenda contained in document WP-VSC No. 1/05 Rev. 2.

Item 2: Background information on the preparation of projects

4. The Chairman informed the Committee about the procedures followed for considering project proposals before and after the establishment of the VSC, highlighting the importance of setting up the VSC to expedite the process of reviewing projects. He referred Members to relevant information contained in documents circulated at the meeting including documents EB-3573/96 Rev. 4, EB-3904/06 and WP-Board No. 955/04 Rev. 1.

5. Regarding the draft Terms of Reference for the VSC (document WP-Board No. 955/04 Rev. 1), the representative of the US asked whether there was an established duration of participation for VSC Members. There was common agreement that Members should participate as long as possible.

Item 3: Evaluation of projects and methodology

6. The Chairman informed the Committee that the “Development strategy for coffee” (document EB-3768/01 Rev. 3) was a reference for prioritizing coffee projects. The US representative noted that the areas of action for projects defined in the document should reflect the objectives of the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) 2001 and asked how often this document was revised by the ICO.

7. The Chairman confirmed that the Development strategy for coffee was related to Article 1 of the ICA, in particular to clauses (1) to promote international cooperation on coffee matters and (8) to analyse and advise on the preparation of projects for the benefit of the world coffee economy, for their subsequent submission to donors or financing organizations, as appropriate. With regard to the timing for revision of the document, he noted that it had been kept flexible to respond to the needs of Members and asked whether there was any particular suggestion for how often it should be revised. The US representative said that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) revised its strategies every five years, since this was an acceptable length of time to evaluate the performance of each priority area.

8. The US representative also asked about the methodology used by the ICO to evaluate achievements and outlined the methodology used by the USAID. The Chairman explained that the ICO had already undertaken an exercise to establish performance indicators in the different units of the Organization and suggested preparing a specific model for coffee projects that would take into consideration some of the suggestions made.

Item 4: Feedback from the VSC on project proposals

9. The Chairman informed the Committee that the VSC was a “virtual” Committee because its Members communicated by email and highlighted the importance of the VSC’s contribution to the process of screening new projects. This was followed by a discussion on the checklist provided and what the VSC tasks should be. The checklist looked difficult to use and it was suggested that it should be simplified bearing in mind that the analysis by the VSC should be in the light of the objectives of the 2001 Agreement. On the question of the VSC tasks, one Member considered that the VSC should give the green light on whether or not to proceed with new project proposals and the reasons why, whilst another indicated that the screening should specifically focus on the technical and scientific merits of new proposals and their compatibility with the ICA.

Item 5: Open floor for discussions

10. Following discussion, the Committee agreed on the following recommendations:
- (a) the ICO should check that new project proposals conform with the CFC format;
 - (b) the VSC screening will focus on technical and scientific merits of proposals and their compatibility with the ICA/ICO Development strategy for coffee; and
 - (c) the VSC should recommend whether or not to approve new proposals.

Item 6: Report to the Executive Board

11. The Committee noted that the Chairman would report on the meeting to the Executive Board.